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ABSTRACT

This exploration of the growing field of literacy voluntarism encompasses the literature, history, trends, and issues of the volunteer role in literacy programs. The majority of the literature is characterized as descriptive and program specific; the research is found to lack definition and theoretical foundation. The literature also reflects differing opinions on ideologies, professionalization of volunteers, methodology, and effectiveness. An overview of current delivery systems focuses on two national organizations--Literacy Volunteers of America and Laubach Literacy Action, the limited use of volunteers in adult basic education programs, the National Adult Literacy Initiative sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education, the role of public libraries, and the Coalition for Literacy. The next section attempts to characterize literacy volunteer programs by (1) describing a dichotomy of individually oriented and community-oriented programs; (2) elaborating a four-part model--mass literacy through existing structures, literacy for immediate needs, movement-directed literacy, and literacy for political action; (3) listing six criteria for community-based literacy education; and (4) synthesizing these typologies into five variables--purpose, scope, organizational setting, professionalism, and finance. Specific programs illustrating each of these facets are then described. The next section addresses administrative concerns and policy considerations. These issues are discussed in terms of the five variables. A concluding section lists six common assumptions about literacy voluntarism and recommends further research to improve policy and practice. A reference list and bibliography are included. (SK)

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Information Series No. 301

ADULT LITERACY VOLUNTEERS: ISSUES AND IDEAS

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The National Center for Research in Vocational Education
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FOREWORD

The Educational Resources Information Center Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education (ERIC/ACVE) is one of 16 clearinghouse in a nationwide system that is funded by the National Institute of Education. One of the functions of the Clearinghouse is to interpret the literature that is entered into the ERIC database. This paper is of particular interest to adult education practitioners, administrators, researchers, and graduate students; community development personnel; and individuals associated with volunteer groups and organizations.

The profession is indebted to Paul Ilsley, Assistant Professor in the Adult Education Program, Syracuse University, for his scholarship in the preparation of this paper. Previously, Dr. Ilsley served as the director of the adult basic education program in Washington County, Maine and as an instructor and curriculum specialist for the State of Illinois Chicago Area Adult Education Center. From 1978 to 1982 he was chairperson and member of the Literacy Volunteers of Illinois, Inc. Currently, Dr. Ilsley serves as book review editor for *Adult Literacy and Basic Education*; he is the lead author of *Recruiting and Training Volunteers* published by McGraw-Hill in 1981.

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Susan Imel, Assistant Director at the ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education, coordinated the publication's development with the assistance of Sandra Kerka. Brenda Hemming and Jean Messick typed the manuscript, and Janet Ray served as word processor operator. Editing was performed by Michele Naylor of the National Center's Editorial Services.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this review and synthesis paper is to promote awareness of literacy voluntarism, its literature, history, and programs. In order to provide information to researchers and practitioners, the subject of adult literacy voluntarism is examined for its developments, trends, and issues. An analysis of the literature base of literacy voluntarism reveals major gaps, and the literature is characterized as follows:

- Most literature is descriptive and program specific.
- There is no detectable cohesiveness or direction to the research base.
- There is no evidence that the literature builds on itself.
- Recent advances in the field have not been subjected to analysis.
- There is little information available about community-oriented groups.
- The literature reflects little change in types of volunteer programs over the past 25 years; however, it does reflect a trend toward the professionalization of volunteers.
- The literature reflects differences of opinions regarding program philosophical bases and managerial schemes and the professionalization of volunteers.

An overview of current delivery systems focuses on two National organizations—Literacy Volunteers of America and Laubach Literacy Action, the limited use of volunteers in adult basic education programs, the National Adult Literacy Initiative sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education, the role of public libraries, and the Coalition for Literacy. A number of questions are raised regarding current efforts including:

- What are the limits of effectiveness of these programs?
- Will efforts to raise the consciousness of the public regarding adult literacy find success?
- What are the limits to cooperation?
- To what extent do these organizations enhance or inhibit the development of community-oriented literacy volunteer programs?
- How important are the common metaphors of literacy volunteer organizations, that is, is there a difference between eradicating illiteracy and promoting literacy?

These questions provide a framework for examining types of literacy volunteer programs in the next section.

Types of literacy volunteer programs are characterized by (1) describing a dichotomy of individually oriented and community-oriented programs; (2) elaborating a four-part model—mass literacy through existing structures, literacy for immediate needs, movement-directed literacy, and literacy for political action; and (3) listing six criteria for community-based-literacy education—possesses a community orientation, remains independent, reaches underserved populations, empowers students, and employs learner-centered curriculum and learner-centered methodology.

These three typologies are synthesized into five variables of purpose, scope, organizational setting, professionalism, and finance. The variables are expanded and used as a tool for examining literacy volunteer programs in a comprehensive manner. Specific programs, illustrating each of the variables, are described as a means of illuminating the broad range of program types.

Using the five variables as a basis, administrative concerns and policy considerations are addressed. Several themes characterize this section. One is that program choice in literacy voluntarism is a function of clear policy. Another is that wise practice includes critical examination of policy and consistency of purpose, scope, organizational setting, professionalism, and finance. Literacy voluntarism is more than a technique; it is the rational use of technique in terms of purpose.

The paper concludes with six common assumptions about literacy voluntarism and recommendations for further research to improve policy and practice. The assumptions and research recommendations are as follows:

- **A well-engineered and highly structured program model is the most suitable one for student and volunteer involvement.** Research is needed to determine the relationship of long range benefits to students and volunteers from highly technical programs.

- **Literacy volunteer programs ought to be highly structured.** Research is needed to confirm which aspects of structure are important to volunteers and to programs that support them.

- **Volunteers pose a threat to paid staff.** Research is needed to determine what kinds of relationships between paid staff and volunteers are most beneficial.

- **Literacy volunteer programs benefit from diversity and heterogeneity of volunteers.** Research is needed on the importance and role of solidarity in volunteer settings.

- **Partnerships between corporate organizations and the voluntary sector will provide status, not to mention increased revenue, to the field of literacy voluntarism.** Research is needed to find out more about the relationship between the corporate and voluntary sectors.

- **Volunteers must be significantly involved if illiteracy is to be meaningfully reduced in the United States.** Research is needed to find out what it would take to reduce adult illiteracy significantly.

Information on literacy voluntarism may be found in the ERIC system under the following descriptors: Adult Basic Education; Adult Education; *Adult Literacy; Community Programs; *Educational Policy; *Illiteracy; Individual Instruction; *Literacy Education; National Programs; Policy Formation; *Program Administration; Program Descriptions; Public Libraries; Social Action; *Volunteers; Community Based Education. Asterisks indicate descriptors having a particular relevance.

INTRODUCTION

This work, which is directed toward researchers and practitioners, is intended to promote awareness of literacy voluntarism, its literature, history, programs, issues, and directions. Through an analysis of the literature base, an attempt is made to synthesize and interpret a variety of points of view and to reduce them to discernable trends. Both the works and programs reviewed number in the hundreds. The result is a number of research suggestions and implications for practice. No claim is made that the subject is completely exhausted. In fact, from the outset it is assumed that literacy voluntarism is dynamic and on the rise. That is, in recent years, there has been remarkable growth in the practice of literacy volunteer efforts. Leaders of the adult literacy movement, among others, believe that the enormous illiteracy condition in the United States simply cannot be mitigated without a strong and persistent volunteer program (Waite 1984). Of course, voluntarism alone will not solve the enormous challenges confronting a society with a large illiterate population (Kangisser 1985). When it comes to wiping out illiteracy in the United States, voluntarism is a necessary but not a sufficient condition. In this work, therefore, the subject of literacy voluntarism is examined for its developments, trends, and issues for research.

Beyond this introduction, the study is organized in five sections. The first section features a review of the literature and offers conclusions regarding its directions and gaps. An analysis of the current state of National literacy volunteer organizations, with some attention to their historical developments, is included in the second section. The third section offers an analysis of various types of literacy volunteer efforts, both in the United States and abroad, and presents conclusions regarding options for practice. Local summary reports that survived the screening process are reported there. Managerial plans, selected grant project reports, books on coordinating volunteers, and papers dedicated to improving managerial practices of volunteer coordinators are studied in the fourth section along with political statements and thematic works that have bearing on the administration of literacy voluntarism. The publication concludes by focusing on issues and problems existing in the field of literacy voluntarism and providing suggestions for future research.

In preparation, several searches were conducted in the following data bases: Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC), Resources, Organizations, and Meetings for Educators (ROME), Sociological Abstracts, and Dissertation Abstracts. Despite the fact that no articles could be found in Sociological Abstracts, nearly 100 articles, books, and dissertations were summoned from the other data bases. Additionally, various works were requested from leaders in the literacy volunteer movement, and from National, State, and local volunteer organizations, yielding another 200 reports and articles. The National organizations lending support include the American Library Association, the Association for Community Based Education, B. Dalton Booksellers, the Business Council for Effective Literacy, the Coalition for Literacy, Laubach Literacy Action, Laubach Literacy International, Literacy Volunteers of America, Inc., the National Adult Literacy Initiative, the National Adult Literacy Project, and the National Adult Volunteer Network of the Division of Adult Education Services in the Office of Vocational and Adult Education of the U.S. Department of Education. These organizations, as diverse as they are, are impressive for the numerous contributions they have made to the National adult literacy effort.

The materials gathered from these sources include research papers, ideology statements, books, proposals, and monographs, either from the United States or abroad. Moreover, leaders within the organizations listed earlier provided listings of local and statewide literacy volunteer projects. Personnel in these programs, including 160 local literacy councils or affiliates, 7 statewide literacy projects, 30 projects funded by exemplary adult basic education funds (funds from Section 310 of the Adult Education Act), 17 community-based organizations, and one statewide clearinghouse for adult education information (Project AdvancE in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania) sent an additional 100 articles, reports, proposals, and manuals for review.

THE LITERATURE BASE

Adult literacy education has emerged as a distinct field of research and practice with its own unique journals, graduate-level courses, associations, and customs. While sharing professional traits of two fields, *literacy* and *voluntarism*, literacy voluntarism is a hybrid of the two fields and unique in both practice and research. Therefore, the materials included in this analysis of the literature refer to volunteer-based literacy settings. In only a few cases are materials included that focus on literacy (and not voluntarism) or voluntarism (and not literacy). Similarly, instructional materials for nonreading adults are not included. For a thematic analysis of the adult literacy literature base, readers are referred to a recent ERIC Information Analysis Paper (Fingeret 1984) entitled *Adult Literacy Education: Current and Future Directions*.

Popular topics for research on literacy voluntarism include volunteer profiles and demographic characteristics of volunteers, success rates of various strategies for instruction (Pasch and Oakley 1985; Stauffer 1974), volunteer and student retention (Johnston and Palmatier 1975), volunteer motivation in literacy education programs (Charnley and Jones 1979; Jones and Charnley 1977; Massachusetts Council for Public Schools 1969), and effectiveness of volunteer recruitment strategies (Jones and Charnley 1977). These pieces of research have a practical bent and offer program advice: strategies to recruit and train volunteers, tips for placement, methods for motivation and evaluation of volunteers, and ideas for program organization.

A significant percentage of the documents (over 30 percent) located through searches of data bases, as well as a smaller portion of documents from other sources, focus on literacy volunteer campaigns, crusades, and projects in other countries. Especially through efforts of the World Council on Adult Education and the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, many attempts have been made to bring literacy educators together to define what it means to be literate, what the goals of literacy initiatives should be, and how people (students) can be involved in the determination of curricula. These organizations recognize that illiteracy is part of a global condition. Several national literacy volunteer campaigns lay claim to reaching more than 90 percent of the illiterate population. Outstanding examples of such literacy programs can be found in Cuba and Nicaragua, and to a lesser extent, in Great Britain, the Soviet Union, the Philippines, Iran, and Mexico. A selected number of foreign literacy campaigns will be reviewed for their merits in a subsequent section.

Analysis of the Literature

As is true for any relatively new field of endeavor, major gaps can be detected in the literature base of literacy voluntarism. There is, in fact, a paucity of meaningful research. As Fingeret (1984) observes, what little research has been conducted "tends to focus on the volunteer rather than on the relationship between volunteers and the programmatic context. Additional research is desperately needed" (p. 23). Her contention is supported by the fact that research in literacy voluntarism, unlike that of both of its parent fields, is sparse. The literature base, though sizable, contains works primarily intended for program administrators and typically lends insight to increased managerial effectiveness. Works on motivation and retention and profiles of volunteers are plentiful. There is

also material on conducting inservice training for volunteers, formulating a needs assessment, developing community linkages, fashioning models of program design, and evaluating programs. As useful as these works may be, most are based on conventional wisdom and experiential insight. Missing is information and research that allows generalization of conclusions beyond the program-specific level, research on the relationship between volunteers and paid staff, investigation of what happens to volunteers as *they* progress through a literacy volunteer program, and studies of the transformation that occurs to the structure of an organization when a volunteer component is attached to it. Eggert (1984) and Ilsley (1985), among others, believe that the field abounds with works of the "how to" sort but that too little emphasis is placed on examination of philosophic underpinnings of the tools and strategies of literacy volunteer settings.

Another gap in the literature is a lack of definition of the term *literacy voluntarism*. Both words, *literacy* and *voluntarism*, are subject to debate and situational definition. The confounding nature of the former can be seen by its various uses. There is functional literacy, political literacy, and economic literacy. Literacy may refer to reading alone in certain contexts or to a level of social status in others (Cervero 1985). For these reasons, definitions of literacy cannot be taken for granted. For purposes of this work, *literacy* is assumed to be a socially desirable educational goal for members of a society; it involves reading, but not necessarily as a primary purpose.

Voluntarism is equally difficult to define because there are various aspects to it as well. Any standard dictionary relates voluntarism to the free will or uncoerced participation. Voluntarism is said to be an exercise of freedom. No one can force a person to volunteer because if he or she succeeded, it would cease to be volunteering. Yet, in terms of organizations, voluntarism does not make sense unless it is viewed as the attempt to coordinate people. To bring volunteers into service does not mean to let them have complete freedom. On the contrary, organizations have obligations to provide orientation and training to volunteers to ensure that the experience will be mutually beneficial to the organization and to volunteers. There is, therefore, a paradox. At a certain point, attempts to coordinate can impinge on a person's sense of free will. For example, if every member of the local service club "volunteers" to teach reading, is it volunteering? If a member decides to volunteer in order to avoid being the only person not serving as a volunteer rather than because he or she wants to volunteer, a subtle form of coercion is at work. It is not, therefore, true volunteering. Likewise, certain marketing strategies, training techniques, and managerial approaches, as useful as they may be to an organization in creating efficiency, may inhibit the free will of volunteers. Voluntarism in organizational settings is, therefore, a balance of the needs of an individual who wishes to be a volunteer and the needs of the organization.

Because of their imprecision, it is exceedingly difficult to combine the words literacy and voluntarism into a universal definition that has any acceptable amount of precision. In broad form, however, *literacy voluntarism* is a balancing of needs among students, volunteers, and organizations for the shared purpose of serving people who seek to improve their personal and/or social condition through mastery of reading.

A reasonable assertion is that members of the literacy volunteer movement understand implicitly what it is. Thus, to a volunteer, the movement is related directly to the obligations of the role (to teach reading skills); to a volunteer coordinator, it is tied to the program components and the organization that supports it. In other words, definitions of the meaning of literacy voluntarism are implicit in organizational goals. For example, to Literacy Volunteers of America, Inc., it is community affiliate-sponsored, one-to-one tutoring of basic reading skills for adults who lack fifth-grade comprehension. Without deliberate examination of what it means to be literate, and what it means to volunteer, such implicit definitions remain parochial or organization specific. Given the complex nature of adult illiteracy and its inextricable link to powerlessness, poverty, racial discrimination

(and other forms of structural inequality), and intergenerational transmission of illiteracy, in its finest sense literacy voluntarism is more than an organization-specific term.

Critics argue forcefully, for example, that programs designed to "mainstream" adults into society will find limited success because of a gap between middle-class educators and lower-class students (Heaney 1983; Kozol 1985). Accordingly, the gap threatens students who must concede dignity before undergoing "treatment" of the illiteracy condition. To them, illiteracy is not a disease, especially not one that resides solely in the individual students. Rather, it is part of a societal condition, and it must be handled as such in order to eradicate it. One-to-one approaches place the problem with an individual, thereby diverting attention away from the societal problem or possible causes of illiteracy. Heaney (1983) believes that such approaches simply will not be effective with more than a fraction of the adult illiterate population.

At this juncture, several themes regarding the literature of literacy voluntarism can be illuminated:

- The majority of the literature is descriptive and case specific in nature. Literacy volunteer administrators never seem to tire of writing detailed accounts of their programs. Several hundred reports have been written since the 1960s describing various program features. To be fair, a large percentage of them are reports written to fulfill obligations to funding agents. Additionally, many are useful for conveying successes and limitations of program strategies. But for the most part, these reports are written as if the viability of literacy voluntarism must be proven with every account.

- The next largest group of material can be described as the self-help kind, or publications that refer others to strategies for success. Typically, the approach taken is to inform volunteer administrators of tried and proven techniques of program planning, implementation, and monitoring. Components of program planning models, such as recruitment, orientation and training of volunteers, instructional approaches, development of instructional materials, student assessment, counseling of volunteers, and program evaluation receive special attention.

- There is no detectable cohesiveness or direction of research. Nor is there evidence that the literature builds on itself. Rather, for the most part, it is idiosyncratic, time specific, or of limited application.

- There has not been a perceptable evolution of information; many of the concerns expressed in the 1960s are reiterated today with first-time exuberance. Examples include the professionalization of volunteers and volunteer coordinators, the need for increased Governmental support, strategies for increased public recognition, and suggestions for the formulation of coalitions. A possible explanation for this is the relatively little attention, and therefore progress, afforded literacy voluntarism until recently.

- Current actions, such as the National Awareness Campaign, funding of the National Adult Literacy Project, the rise of volunteer components in adult basic education programs and libraries, and the advent of the Coalition for Literacy, to name a few, suggest that progress has been made to win support of educators and the public alike. However, analysis of these achievements and reformulation of long-range strategies have not been forthcoming.

- Very few works can be found in the data bases that describe the overtly political community-oriented groups (also referred to as community-based organizations or CBOs). For understandable reasons, namely lack of funding and human resources, leaders of these organizations do not often engage in research. A notable exception is the monograph funded by B. Dalton Booksellers, *Adult Literacy: Study of Community Based Literacy Programs* (Zachariadis 1983). It is a survey study of a representational number of community-based literacy programs in different parts of the country.

- The prevailing managerial schemes for literacy voluntarism have, for the most part, remained unchallenged for 30 years. The result has been at least twofold: first, elaboration of various techniques has caused greater levels of efficiency in volunteer programs, i.e., productive recruitment campaigns and higher retention rates, (Slatkin 1981a) and second, an "employment model" replete with job descriptions and programmed training schemes dominates programs. The illusion results that there is and ought to be a homogeneity of strategy among literacy volunteer programs instead of a diversity of approaches.

- Even though there seems to be no evolution of type of volunteer program reflected in the literature base, there is an unmistakable trend toward professionalization of volunteers. From various sources (Crandall, Lerche, and Marchilonis 1985; Johnson 1985; Lyman 1977), planners of literacy volunteer programs are encouraged to develop structured training and management schemes for volunteers and for volunteer coordinators. Certification of volunteers through training has gained attention (Waite 1984).

Conclusion

Vines (1983) reports that the total of all adult literacy efforts in the United States serves 2.5 million illiterate adults, or just 7 percent of the intended population. Furthermore, the number of students served each year equals the number of illiterate persons reaching adulthood or immigrating to the United States each year. This means that literacy programs only keep pace with the illiteracy tide and that there are as many illiterate adults now in the United States as there were 20 years ago.

There is a perceived difference of opinion in the literature base regarding ideologies of programs that follow a one-to-one approach and those that focus on community problems (Fingeret 1984). Also, there are differences of opinion regarding the correct path to professionalization of volunteers and use of various program and managerial techniques. Additionally, opinions differ as to who ought to shoulder the financial burdens of literacy volunteer programs. And, finally, how to alleviate the fragmentary nature of literacy volunteer efforts in the United States is a challenge that will receive greater amounts of attention in the years ahead. As the number and type of organizations involved in literacy voluntarism increases, from a variety of Governmental agencies to councils of corporate benefactors, as well as local literacy volunteer organizations, observers wonder whether organizations will work at cross-purposes and compete for scarce dollars or whether avenues for cooperation will be found (Kangisser 1985).

Then there are criticisms of effectiveness. To be precise, literacy voluntarism has been viewed as a stopgap measure, a program component that may inhibit professionalization of the field, and even as an exploitive strategy that capitalizes on the goodwill of volunteers. A frequent criticism levied at the skill level of volunteers is that they are not suitably trained and therefore lack proper expertise: "Many well-meaning volunteers believe that because they themselves can read, they are

capable of teaching another person to read. This attitude, although well-intended, is an oversimplification of the skills necessary to teach an adult illiterate to read" (Meyer 1985, p. 707).

Critics of literacy voluntarism, therefore, come from different directions. On one front, there are professional reading specialists and adult educators who express concern that literacy volunteers are undertrained. Coming from another direction are the liberatory educators who argue that volunteers are overly specialized in reading technique, removed from the context of the learners, and neglectful of the societal roots of the problem. To reach a greater percentage of the illiterate population, according to vocal critics, literacy must be viewed as more than acquisition of discrete skills of reading and arithmetic; it must be viewed as part of the domain of empowerment of disenfranchised groups of people (Heaney 1983; Kozol 1985). They believe that increased funding of traditional programs alone will not solve the illiteracy problem. What is needed instead are a variety of models of literacy voluntarism and tolerance for alternative models.

There are signs that a forecast of increased research on the topic of literacy voluntarism is plausible. The first is increased awareness of successes of literacy volunteer campaigns in various countries such as Canada, Cuba, Great Britain, and Nicaragua. The second is a significant formulation of a number of literacy groups into coalitions. Combined with increased visibility of existing and new National literacy groups and increased interest among adult educators, it is possible that a research agenda will be developed and the literature base expanded. Literacy volunteer staff have simply not had the time or inclination to meet research demands before now. The difference is that, with more programs, increased public awareness of the problems of adult illiteracy, and better cooperation among literacy organizations, there comes a greater opportunity to diversify.

In the next chapter an overview of current literacy volunteer efforts will be presented in order to examine the nature of the growth of literacy voluntarism and to substantiate the claims of increased public awareness and cooperation among literacy groups.

AN OVERVIEW OF CURRENT LITERACY VOLUNTEER DELIVERY SYSTEMS

Given the immature nature of the literature and low allocation of funds, it might be said that literacy voluntarism has not been blessed with meaningful status in the United States. Historically, it has either been a foster child of larger organizations, such as programs operating within adult evening schools, or a poor cousin of "legitimate" agencies, such as volunteer-based community literacy councils. Perhaps the tide has turned. Within the past 5 years strides have been made on the National level that indicate enhanced visibility of the literacy volunteer movement. Examples of such recent developments include the following:

- **The U.S. Department of Education's Secretarial Initiative on Adult Literacy** has generated excitement among volunteer leaders by pledging moral and legislative support to the effort of adult literacy.

- **The Business Council for Effective Literacy** informs key corporate leaders of the illiteracy problem and seeks ways of involving corporation energy and resources in their local communities.

- **B. Dalton Booksellers** has encouraged, through grant allocations, cooperation among the major literacy volunteer organizations, and has continued to press for increased collaboration among the most disparate types of voluntary literacy groups.

- **The National Adult Literacy Project**, funded through the National Institute of Education, has developed reports that provide information to members of the literacy volunteer movement.

- **The Coalition for Literacy**, sponsor of the National Ad Campaign, has brought together leaders of the volunteer movement for roundtable discussions and has created the beginnings of a research agenda.

- **The National Ad Campaign**, a televised set of commercial messages intended to attract volunteers into literacy settings, has prompted 50,000 people to offer services in the first 5 months of operation (January through May 1985).

In this section, the histories of a selected number of programs, both new and old, are described so that readers may gain a sense of appreciation for the range of efforts currently underway. The most visible developments have occurred in (1) organizations that have a National focus, such as the Coalition for Literacy and adult basic education and (2) organizations that promote the teaching of adult literacy on a one-to-one basis, such as Laubach Literacy Action and Literacy Volunteers of America. The two types are not always synonymous though perceptive readers will detect the overlap. A third type of program, community-based independent programs of adult literacy, will be reviewed in subsequent sections.

The following programs are described here: Laubach Literacy Action, Literacy Volunteers of America, literacy voluntarism within adult basic education, the Secretary of Education's Initiative on Literacy Voluntarism, literacy voluntarism in American public libraries, and the Coalition for Literacy. Through a review of these organizations, readers may gain a sense of the direction of the literacy voluntarism movement, or at least an understanding of its most visible parts.

An excellent treatment of the history of literacy efforts in the United States can be found in *Pioneers and New Frontiers: The Role of Volunteers in Combating Adult Illiteracy* (Kangisser 1985). In this work, mirroring the format employed by Charnley and Jones (1979), Kangisser presents an account of the development of the adult literacy movement in the United States according to phases. The first phase, "volunteer-managed agencies pioneer" (pp. 5-9), traces the development of Laubach Literacy International, Literacy Volunteers of America, Inc., and the Federal program of adult basic education. The second phase, "other providers enter the picture" (pp. 10-20), describes programs sponsored by adult basic education, community-based organizations, libraries, correctional institutions, and churches. The third phase, "new frontiers" (pp. 21-24), which is just now emerging, describes four trends: professionalism of volunteers, a diversification of the volunteer pool, increased corporate-sponsored voluntarism, and greater levels of cooperation. The publication concludes with an examination of two myths concerning voluntarism: first, that it can alleviate the literacy problem, and second that it is free.

Two National Organizations: Laubach Literacy Action and Literacy Volunteers of America

Laubach Literacy Action

Any history of literacy voluntarism must include an account of Dr. Frank C. Laubach, known to some as "the apostle of voluntary literacy work" (Mulira 1975, p. 38). Because of Laubach's status as a missionary of the church, popular opinion is that his purposes had more to do with eradicating heathenism than illiteracy; however, Mulira refutes that idea and instead depicts Laubach as a social change agent. Quoting Laubach, Mulira makes the point, "Indeed, from the very first week a literacy campaign ought to be used as a means to other objectives—cultural, economic, social and religious. If it is not thus a means to some end, it is likely to grow cold and die" (p. 40).

Laubach is credited with inspiring a literacy crusade that spread to dozens of countries and for developing primers in 312 languages. Additionally, he wrote 40 books, including texts concerning the teaching of reading and religious works. Perhaps the best known work is *Forty Years With the Silent Billion* (1970), an autobiographical statement of his many accomplishments and his travels around the world. Two of those accomplishments are the development of the Each One Teach One slogan (which was fashioned in the Philippines in the 1930s and became a rallying cry for the campaign) and the creation of the National Affiliation for Literacy Advance (NALA) in Syracuse, New York, which has proven to be a program of lasting value. In 1914 Laubach was a cofounder of the Committee on World Literacy and Christian Literature (informally known as Lit-Lit), later renamed Intermedia. Intermedia exists today and is dedicated to many of Laubach's original purposes and philosophical assumptions including the following: (1) literacy programs should be a means to other ends, (2) programs should grow out of the problems of the participants, and (3) learners should play an active part in the teaching process.

A collection of Laubach's papers is housed at Syracuse University and contains many interesting letters, manuscripts, and papers that analyze national literacy efforts in such countries as

Egypt, India, and Brazil. The collections consist of 328 boxes of papers, 10 cartons of films, 6 scrapbooks, and a variety of ledgers. By studying the collection, a person cannot help but be impressed with Laubach's unceasing desire to end the illiteracy problem. His main theme was exploration of ways to assist adults around the world in attaining literacy.

It was not until 1955 that Laubach founded Laubach Literacy, Inc., in Syracuse. The organization was built on the Each One Teach One strategy with the use of primers that were designed so that common people, not only professional reading teachers, could use them. Laubach stressed that each nonreader possessed worth and dignity, a philosophical component that remains a part of the organization today. Programs in Afghanistan, Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, India, Israel (West Bank), Panama, and Zimbabwe carry out the tradition. The establishment of New Reader's Press, a component of Laubach Literacy International, was important to the organization because it meant quality control of materials. The press is important for financial reasons as well. Sales of materials total over $1.5 million per annum, or roughly 60 percent of the total revenue for the entire organization. Other sources of income include foundation and Governmental grants, donations, membership dues, gifts, and bequests (Laubach Literacy International 1980, 1981, 1982, 1983, 1984).

NALA gave rise to Laubach Literacy Action, the domestic arm of Laubach Literacy International. Currently, 50,000 volunteers serve 60,000 students through this system. Local affiliates and councils control the management and administrative aspects of their programs. Affiliates, accordingly, are autonomous financially and in setting program goals. Members of the National staff travel to different parts of the country to provide technical assistance, regional conferences, ideas for program development, newsletters, materials, and moral support. In terms of size, location, and purpose, local programs are quite different. Some concentrate on teaching English to non-English-speaking adults whereas others focus on reading skills for native English-speaking adults. Program locations include churches, correctional facilities, hospitals, homes, and public schools.

Literacy Volunteers of America

Literacy Volunteers of America, Inc. (LVA), also located in Syracuse, New York, has grown steadily since 1962 from a communitywide literacy club to an organized literacy campaign of National proportions. LVA is a nonprofit organization that provides training and support for volunteers who individually tutor adults in basic reading or conversational English. An estimated 30,000 students and tutors meet on a weekly basis, sometimes twice a week, in a myriad of places in 31 States and 2 Canadian provinces. The founder, Ruth Colvin, is credited with spearheading the rapid development and growth of the organization. (At one point Colvin, a resident of Syracuse, was a tutor with the Laubach program, which accounts for the establishment of LVA in the same city in which Laubach has its headquarters.) A National staff of 11 persons, including field representatives, materials specialists, and fund-raisers, carry out the day-to-day decisions and chart the direction of the organization. Over 100,000 people have received training through the LVA system (Colvin 1983).

The LVA program model includes organizations at the local, State, and National levels. Local affiliations are responsible for governance of their own programs, including fund-raising and, within certain limits, purposes. State offices, having now been formed in nine States through grants from such sources as State departments of education, coordinate program expansion efforts, staff development, and technical assistance. In addition, state-level staff form linkages with other statewide agencies (the adult basic education programs and correctional institutions, for example) for cooperative program development, shared sites, and joint training. At the National

level, the primary purposes of LVA are to (1) assist programs in organizational and educational methods, (2) develop new programs, (3) write grant proposals, (4) develop new materials, (5) publish a newsletter, and (6) sponsor an annual National conference.

The *Policies and Procedures Manual* (Literacy Volunteers of America 1983) offers very specific guidelines for the development of a literacy volunteer program. Details often left to the discretion of local personnel, such as how to hire a paid staff person, administer the board, and recognize volunteers, are offered in the manual for optional use by local units. Also, the manual stipulates contractual arrangements, suggesting that local affiliates, though autonomous, are nevertheless expected to provide periodic reports of the progress of the program. Also, they are expected to pay dues on an annual basis, to send at least one person to the annual conference, and to abide by the philosophy so carefully specified in the training program. Should a program fail to live up to these points its name can be withdrawn. Affiliates are complex arrangements of a variety of types of efforts, and the National staff allows great variance in program management. Programs failing to maintain minimum standards for activity level and accountability are terminated as affiliates, but only after a variety of staff support services have been provided.

LVA's unique training program, the Basic Reading Workshop, is an 18-hour program designed to offer skill and attitude development to volunteers. Commonly, volunteers are asked to purchase their own training materials because this practice is thought to develop a strong commitment sooner. During training, tutors learn to use TUTOR—*Techniques Used in the Teaching of Reading* (Colvin and Root 1984). The book contains how-to information on the use of five teaching strategies: the language experience approach, phonics, word patterns, sight words, and context clues. Included also are motivational strategies, tips for selecting and developing materials, ideas for lesson planning, and a list of the 300 most commonly used words in the English language. In the workshops, usually spread over four to six sessions, volunteers learn how to use a diagnostic instrument, called READ, or *Reading Evaluation Adult Diagnosis* (Colvin and Root 1982). The READ test is designed to find the strengths and weaknesses of a person's reading ability below the fifth-grade level. Once a student is tested, tutors then can form a strategy for lessons, based on the particular results. A variety of other materials are available for purchase from Literacy Volunteers of America, Inc., including instructional slide-tape inservice presentations, study skills books, math skills books, various English-as-a-second language materials, and volunteer management manuals.

Summary

In summary, the two National literacy volunteer organizations, both based in Syracuse, provide similar services in a fairly similar fashion. Owing to the diversity of the affiliates in both organizations and their continued diversification, a characterization of differences would be an exercise in imprecision and therefore pointless. In fact, through grants from such foundations as Dayton-Hudson, the organizations have established joint ventures and probably will continue to do so as public awareness of adult illiteracy increases. As it is, personnel from both organizations have knowledge and working relationships with local programs in both systems. Local affiliate personnel have found it advantageous to "take the best" from both LVA and LLA because it means having a greater number of program strategies, materials, and sources of assistance.

Both organizations can be characterized by their long-standing traditions, the leadership they have shown on the National level, especially within Governmental and corporate circles, and their energetic staffs. Without attempting any exact analysis at this point, one can state that both organizations uphold strong middle-class orientations in such matters as interpretations and definitions of literacy, the type and method of training provided, and the goals they attempt to reach.

This orientation is evidenced by the types of volunteers that are attracted to the programs, many of whom are well above the median income level of the United States. Research at the doctoral level, soon to be completed at Syracuse University, should confirm this characterization, and will add insight into the motivations and perceptions of the volunteers themselves.

Literacy Volunteers in Adult Basic Education

Despite its 20-year history, not until recently have programs of adult basic education (ABE) found many uses for volunteers. To specify the reasons for this requires a brief history of the Adult Education Act and a synopsis of the development of adult basic education starting with the inception of the act. In 1964 the U.S. Office of Economic Opportunity sponsored legislation permitting basic education for adults (persons 16 years of age or older). The Adult Education Act was established in 1966 under Public Law 89-750 and was transferred to the U.S. Department of Education. The legislation has had three revisions through 14 legislative updates. The legislation provides for funding to States for instruction in reading, grammar, mathematics, and "coping skills" at or below the eighth-grade level (National Advisory Council on Adult Education 1980).

The initial intention of the Adult Education Act was to eradicate illiteracy in the United States, and it was expected to do so in its first 10 years of operation. Currently, each State receives at least $250,000 annually. The remainder of the nearly $100 million grant is divided among States on a proportional basis, according to estimates of students requiring these services. Additionally, the Federal share to States is to be no more than 90 percent of total dollars allocated to adult basic education by the State, though some States contribute more than 10 percent. Estimates are that State contributions to ABE exceed $100 million. In turn, State agencies, usually the State departments of education, administer the provisions of the legislation by allocating money to local educational agencies, whether they be public or proprietary. Some States utilize a request for proposal system while others form councils to determine which agencies receive funding. State responsibilities include, in addition to allocation of funding, ensuring that the sections of the act are adhered to, providing technical and supportive services, and administering the regulatory functions. In some States, there are requirements placed on programs beyond the stipulations of the Adult Education Act, demanding, for example, diagnosis of students, or inservice education for teachers (Darkenwald and Valentine 1984).

Section 310 of the act mandates that at least 10 percent of the Federal share of funding must be spent on special experimental demonstration projects and teacher training. Projects that receive this type of funding are, therefore, called 310 projects, or are said to have received 310 money. Over the years the 310 projects have been an important, and nearly the only, source of funding of volunteer programs in the adult basic education system. Some states, again, perhaps through requests for proposals, assign the money to local programs to design and implement a model volunteer project.

A wide assortment of 310 projects has been funded throughout the years, but, until recently, communication among them and dissemination of results from them has not been well coordinated (see *Catalog of Adult Education Projects* 1981, 1982, 1983, 1984a, 1984b). The majority of the 310 demonstration projects pertaining to voluntarism has historically held a central premise that literacy voluntarism is new. For example, not one of the final reports of the 310 volunteer projects contained in the ERIC database makes significant reference to similar 310 programs. There is probably good reason for the tactic—to enhance the possibility of receiving funding. But the failure of 310 project proposals to acknowledge prior attempts of literacy volunteer programming, especially among the dozens of other 310 projects, constitutes a gross inaccuracy and is indicative of the organizational isolation that is characteristic of literacy volunteer programs.

Adult basic education programs are not monolithic. Just as not all LVA programs are alike, not all ABE programs are alike. Yet, there are distinct similarities and characterizations to be made about the adult basic education movement, and these have been made in such books as *Last Gamble on Education: Dynamics of Adult Basic Education* (Mezirow, Darkenwald, and Knox 1975). First, teachers in adult basic education are, by and large, part-time. While attempts to elevate the status of the field through professionalization have in some cases brought coordinated and increasingly sophisticated training programs, they have not brought recognition of the need for full-time teachers. Consequently, an issue in the field is the relatively low status part-time teachers have compared with full-time. Whether or not to certify instructors remains an issue in the field and is thought by some to be a vehicle for increasing status, by others, a boondoggle. Second, through State associations, graduate studies programs in adult education, and State mandate, opportunities for staffs at adult basic education programs to gain a number of skills in teaching reading, math, grammar, and coping skills have increased.

Also, ABE programs are commonly attached to high school equivalency programs, evening schools, alternative schools, or continuing education divisions within the jurisdiction of a public school system or community college. Though the Adult Education Act stipulates that the majority of the instruction is to be spent on adults who perform at the lowest reading levels and a much lesser amount on students nearing the high school completion level, reality is otherwise. With allocation of funding comes the need to demonstrate that students can be processed in large numbers efficiently and quickly. An organization that can "move" 200 students through a program with a faculty of 6 part-time teachers is likely to be viewed more favorably by State officials than a similarly funded program of 100 students. Owing to the fact that nonreading adults take more instructional time than more mobile and self-confident students at, say, the 10th-grade level, programs commonly ignore this aspect of the act and pay particular attention instead to General Educational Development (GED) instruction. State officials, aware of the situation, are themselves locked into a numbers game with legislatures and Federal authorities and do little to press for more literacy education (Cunningham 1983).

The purpose of the preceding discussion has been to provide a background to explain why, until recently, volunteers have not been seen in many ABE programs. In a few States, such as Maine and New York, a marriage exists between the State departments of adult education and the State agency for one of the National literacy organizations, LLA or LVA. The relationship usually results in 310 grants being awarded to the volunteer groups, then incorporation of literacy voluntarism into program efforts at the local level. For reasons cited earlier, issues within local programs play against utilization of volunteers. In the first place, teachers may be motivated primarily by reasons other than pay and may not accept volunteers unless they see a need to do so. For another, some teachers perceive the preferred direction to be toward increased numbers of full-time teachers, not voluntary help. Still a third reason may be that teachers and administrators in adult basic education are busy and fear that volunteers will devour precious time. Related to this is the fact that neither teachers nor administrators have the training to supervise volunteers effectively. A less popular but noticeable objection is that, even with training, volunteers will lack sufficient skills to be effective teachers of reading. As a result of such obstacles, volunteers, outside of 310 projects, have not been accepted into ABE programs. That is, until recently.

With increased attention to adult illiteracy, and the announcement of successes of 310 projects and local literacy volunteer affiliates, ABE administrators are reconsidering their posture on volunteers. Especially in California, Illinois, New Mexico, New York, and Pennsylvania, fiscal resources have been set aside or a greater share of 310 money has been allocated for volunteer development.

At the National level, the Division of Adult Education Services, Office of Vocational and Adult Education, U.S. Department of Education, houses a National Volunteer Network Coordination Office. This nonregulatory effort provides a newsletter to 310 grant recipients, reviews legislative attempts, announces awarding of grants, notifies adult educators of conferences, and informs programs of recent publications. Most helpful of all is a compilation of current volunteer programs, complete with names, addresses, and phone numbers. In short, it is easier than ever for local adult basic education administrators to develop volunteer components because they are likely to find friends at the State and National levels. However, it remains to be seen how teachers will react.

The Secretary of Education's Initiative

In 1982 Diane Welsh Vines was appointed by Secretary of Education, Terrell Bell, to launch a special initiative to foster collaboration between aspects of the public and private sectors concerned with illiteracy, specifically among the military, voluntary organizations, community organizations, and corporations (Vines 1983). Many activities were planned, including the following: to identify exemplary programs, to encourage the utilization of high school and college students in literacy volunteer settings, and to propose collaboration among leaders of adult, special, and vocational education. The strategy of the Adult Literacy Initiative staff has been to visit agencies, encourage new ventures, and sponsor conferences. The initiative has not had the power to grant funds, but it has merely kept watch on grants allocated by other agencies such as the National Institute of Education and the Office of Postsecondary Education. For example, a work-study grant to 18 colleges and universities was earmarked for the purpose of encouraging literacy voluntarism among college students (Nickse 1984). Fifty such projects are being funded in FY 85 at a cost of $706,000. According to reports, during the initial project 256 students helped nearly 8,200 adults (Vines 1985).

The American Public Libraries and Literacy Voluntarism

The Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA) has been amended on 15 occasions since 1956 when Public Law 84-597 was first enacted by Congress. Through the years, various methods and means have been used to extend library services to underserved populations. Special groups specifically identified in various forms of the legislation include native Americans, persons with physical disabilities, low income families, older Americans, non-English speaking adults, and illiterate adults. Through the act in its current form (amended in 1984), libraries may be renovated for accessibility, administrative areas may be strengthened, computers may be purchased, and programs for the underserved may be implemented. Including all six titles of the act, approximately $161 million have been authorized for appropriation for these purposes. States receive grants from the act on the basis of a proportion of size of population, and are expected to perform all regulatory functions.

According to Chute (1985), libraries in the States of California, Florida, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, and South Carolina are known to have strong literacy components. Commonly, libraries in these States either request the assistance of Laubach Literacy Action or Literacy Volunteers of America or merely offer space to them. California committed $2.5 million in LSCA funds to the problem of illiteracy in 1984. Chute identifies three approaches that can be used in library literacy programs: one-to-one, community literacy, and new technology. The first two types of approaches correspond to Fingeret's (1984) individually oriented and community-oriented models. The new technologies model is designed to spread programming to far greater numbers of people through cable television (with follow-up on a one-to-one basis), self-paced videodisc, and interactive computers.

As Chute (1985) surmises, "with the LSCA reauthorization of 1984, the priority for literacy efforts was highlighted. The LSCA program has made a significant contribution to the cause of literacy. The challenge that is faced today is how to reach the 95 percent of illiterates that remain. The data exist to show that the LSCA funds can be used in a leadership role in this effort" (p. 13). There is no doubt about the significance of the involvement of libraries in the struggle for literacy. Perhaps with cooperation from adult education agencies and continued coordination with the National literacy organizations, Chute's forecast will be realized.

A report from the Librarian of Congress to the Congress, *Books in Our Future* (Boorstin 1984), speaks to the issue of illiteracy in the United States and libraries' obligation to coordinate services. In a carefully worded analysis of the problem, the role of the library is revealed:

> It would be comforting to think that we could simply pass laws against illiteracy and aliteracy, but they cannot be legislated away. Their menace and their magnitude come from the fact that they are everywhere—among young and old, poor and rich, in cities and in small towns and rural areas. As the problem is everywhere so the solutions are everywhere. We all have the responsibility and the power—in our homes, schools, libraries, churches, civic and fraternal organizations, businesses, labor unions—to do something about it (p. 27).

Whether librarians perceive their roles to include an educative function or not, attempts are clearly being made to draw libraries further into the adult literacy voluntarism movement. Lyman (1977) confirms the importance of the role of libraries in the literacy movement. She supports the notion that collaboration with the community is the correct pathway for involvement for the Nation's libraries. Although there are many examples of excellent cooperation and numerous examples of library-based literacy programs, a debate in the profession continues with regard to the role of a librarian. Since 1973 a branch of the 40,000-member American Library Association (ALA), the Office for Library Outreach Services, has promoted literacy voluntarism in libraries. With the belief that libraries are neutral, nonthreatening places for learning, this organization suggests ways for libraries to form linkages with literacy agencies and to develop programs of their own. Lyman's (1977) guidebook helps members understand how libraries can implement literacy volunteer programs. Another ALA (1979) publication posits examples of effective programs that serve as inspiration for those who wish to join the effort.

The Coalition for Literacy

The Coalition for Literacy began in 1981 through organizing efforts within the American Library Association. The chief purposes of the coalition are to bring together leaders of the adult literacy movement and to launch a nationwide multimedia advertising campaign that will focus National attention on the illiteracy problem. Member organizations include the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education, the American Association of Advertising Agencies, the American Library Association, B. Dalton Booksellers, the International Reading Association, Laubach Literacy Action, and Literacy Volunteers of America. The Executive Committee, chaired by Violet Malone, is composed of representatives of these organizations. It meets six times a year to discuss ways to enhance cooperation among various literacy groups and to increase effectiveness of programs.

The 3-year advertising campaign is especially designed to attract volunteers into literacy settings. Through grants and donation of services from the National Advertising Council and others, the operation began in early 1985. Seventeen print, consumer magazine, newspaper, television,

and radio ads have been developed. (The value of the donation of service by the Advertising Council is $20 million annually.) Persons responding to the ads are encouraged to call a toll-free number. Their names are then referred directly to local councils, libraries, or affiliates—places where they can volunteer to help people learn to read. Calls are taken at the CONTACT Literacy Center in Lincoln, Nebraska. For referral purposes, CONTACT maintains an updated list of participating programs (over 6,000 literacy programs and 4,000 human service agencies). It is estimated that within the first year alone 150,000 volunteers will be recruited through this system. If the council is successful with grant writing, a subfunction of research is expected to develop. A primary focus of the research will be to evaluate the ad campaign.

Conclusion

Though not all literacy volunteer organizations are described in this section, those that are represent collectively the majority of literacy volunteer efforts in the United States. They share common purposes. One is to awaken action to the illiteracy problem on a National level. Another is that the organizations are in concert regarding a definition of literacy and the notion that reading is fundamental to success. Also, the approach most frequently advocated by these groups is one-to-one, individually oriented instruction. With these commonalities, the following queries can be directed at all of the organizations if they can be directed at any.

- What are the limits of effectiveness of these programs? To reach a significantly greater percentage of the adult illiterate population, does an answer lie in increasing the capacities of ABE, the National volunteer organizations, and the public library system? The answer to these questions may never be found because the ultimate capacities may never be determined. Yet, as cooperation becomes manifest, and as programs, especially the National literacy organizations, grow in size, indicators of effectiveness could be researched in light of proportional spending. No assumption along these lines, not even the assumption that increased revenue will lead to proportional gains, can be made.

- Will efforts to raise the consciousness of the public regarding adult illiteracy, such as the National Ad Campaign, find success? If so, what lasting effects will the campaign have once the 3-year cycle is complete? There are a number of new literacy volunteer organizations on the horizon. It is possible that interest in adult literacy is of short-term duration.

- What are the limits to cooperation? Despite their similarities, the organizations reviewed here are not exactly alike. Even if organizations agree on the large issues, smaller ones such as who has the best training program can interfere with cooperative ventures. To safeguard against rifts among organizations, realistic expectations for cooperation must be found.

- To what extent do these organizations enhance or inhibit the development of community-oriented literacy volunteer programs? Since the data are nonexistent no answer can be found. Yet the question remains important enough to research. A related question has to do with whether there is room for a variety of "models" of literacy voluntarism or whether organizational rivalries preclude diversity.

- How important are the common metaphors of literacy volunteer organizations? A popular one is medical, and words like *diagnose*, *clinic*, *treatment*, and *prescription* are commonplace. Illiteracy is viewed as a *disease*. At a different level, another metaphor is militaristic.

That is, we must *combat* illiteracy, *join forces*, *eradicate* the problem, and *strategize* maneuvers. Is there a difference between eradicating illiteracy and promoting literacy?

As the examination of other types of literacy volunteer programs continues, the questions posed here may be kept in mind. To do so means extending the range of choices available to practitioners of literacy volunteer programs.

TYPES OF LITERACY VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS

In the United States alone, there are more than 2,000 independent literacy councils and programs, as well as literacy volunteer components attached to adult basic education programs, libraries, the YMCA, and other service organizations; with such an assortment of efforts, it is impossible to describe a "typical" literacy volunteer model. Fortunately, typologies exist, and studies have been made that explain some of the more common differences. Typologies of literacy schemes are useful because they allow for the detection of similarities and differences among efforts. This section provides an examination of three such typologies as offered by Fingeret (1984), Caswell (1985), and Zachariadis (1983) and introduces a fourth one through an analysis of the typologies.

To expand upon the analysis, a number of programs are reviewed using variables emerging from the analysis. In selecting programs for review, consideration was given to variety of type and geographic representation. Salient characteristics of selected programs are outlined to illustrate the wide variety of program choices available to planners. To summarize, the goal of this section is to describe the broad range of literacy volunteer programs and to illuminate choices of programming. The assumption is made that there are possibilities for literacy volunteer programming in the United States that have yet to be realized.

Dichotomizing Literacy Volunteer Programs

Fingeret (1984) presents a dichotomy of literacy programs based on, among other things, their goals. As mentioned earlier, one type of program is called *individually oriented* and the other type is termed *community oriented*. Individually oriented programs serve students through a one-to-one instructional strategy and are representative of standardized, large-scale organizations such as adult basic education programs and Literacy Volunteers of America affiliates. The goal of such programs is to provide the most feasible and expedient instruction possible for the purpose of improving students' reading levels. Instruction is usually paced according to a student's ability. An assumption is that a key to a better and richer life lies in the acquisition of reading skills.

Community-oriented programs tend to be independent in nature, localized in a particular community, and designed to serve groups of people with a common situation or problem such as migrant workers, undocumented workers, or unemployed steelworkers. Generally, the instructional strategy includes student determination of problems through an analysis of group-specific situations. The goals of such programs include empowering individuals with a sense of independence and the ability to detect, analyze, and address the problems that surround them. Since reading is an important tool for effective citizenship and independence, it is necessarily a part, though not always the most important part, of community-oriented programs. Literacy is defined, loosely, as the ability to meet life challenges. One example of a community-oriented program would be a program that helped Latina mothers to use effectively the governmental resources that best serve their particular circumstances. Another would be a program that helped unemployed steelworkers with their struggle to regain employment.

Students in community-oriented programs not only determine curricula, but also the strategies for action. The role of an educator does not include authoritative measures such as designing lesson plans and selecting materials for study. Rather, facilitators provide a process, not a viewpoint, for education to occur. A variety of authors (Hunter and Harman 1979; Kozol 1985; and Zachariadis 1983) believe that in order to address literacy correctly, the context of the students must be addressed directly by students themselves.

Fingeret's (1984) model was meant for analysis of all literacy programs, not just literacy voluntarism. Nevertheless, since volunteers are utilized in both individually oriented and community-oriented literacy programs, the dichotomy makes sense in volunteer situations. Fingeret's distinction is important not only because of its frequency of use but also because it implies different political orientations. The community-oriented programs reckon with the conditions that surround illiteracy, such as poverty, chronic unemployment, and hunger. The individually oriented programs operate under the belief that acquisition of crucial reading and communication skills will enable a suitably motivated person to reach new levels of independence. The dichotomy is also useful because it brings attention to community-oriented programs, which have been underrepresented in allocation of fiscal resources and in the literature. Therefore, the dichotomy increases recognition of a model of literacy that has drawn little attention.

A Four-Part Model of Literacy Voluntarism

Robert Caswell, President of Laubach Literacy International, provides a four-part model that elaborates on the aforementioned distinction (Caswell 1985). The four parts coincide with historical developments of literacy voluntarism and may even reflect a direction of the movement. However, the model is not meant to be hierarchical. With each type or group, Caswell provides an estimate of the percentage of existing programs that fit this category. The first type is "mass literacy through existing structures." As many as 40 percent of all literacy volunteer programs are of this type. Growing out of the economic development and war on poverty campaigns of the 1950s and 1960s, the premise of the first type of program is that as a person's literacy increases, his or her chances for obtaining a job or a promotion also increase. Literacy programs were therefore begun in factories, trade schools, hospitals, and libraries to promote worker literacy and followed, for the most part, a one-to-one format. In this program type, workers' rights, as well as the plethora of conditions that accompany illiteracy, are viewed on an individual basis.

In the 1970s the relationship between literacy and good jobs was questioned. To this day, doubt remains whether graduates of most literacy programs attain anything other than the ability to read and write. As yet, there is not persuasive evidence in the literature demonstrating that acquisition of these skills opens doors for people (Darkenwald and Valentine 1984). The rhetoric changed, in any case, from literacy as a sufficient condition to literacy as a necessary condition, not only for job seeking, but also for citizenship (Northcutt et al. 1975). It was during this period that Caswell's second phase, "literacy for immediate needs," took shape. Programs moved from the factory to the barrio to meet students where they live and to address such immediate needs as food shortages, shelter problems, poor health, and unresponsive Governmental services. In Caswell's estimate, 40 percent of programs in the United States today operate with such a mission.

The third type of program is what Caswell refers to as "movement-directed literacy." There is a certain similarity between this type of literacy effort and community-oriented literacy programs because, while attention is paid to listening, speaking, writing skills, and mathematics skills, the focus is on awareness of social problems, especially problems that are common to the students. The materials might be developed locally in such programs, or standardized, so long as they are

used to address local issues. Regardless, "movement-directed literacy" depends on a unity of purpose among students for it to be successful. Caswell estimates that 14 percent of literacy programs in the United States fall into this category. Many of the programs sponsored by Laubach Literacy International in other countries are of this type. In Colombia, for example, literacy programs serve as one means of resolving community-defined problems. Literacy tutors work with labor unions and village leaders to organize labor and cooperatives. Newsletters such as *Cry in the Night* and *The Anvil** are testimony to the communication efforts of such programs.

Caswell calls the fourth type of literacy program "literacy for political action," and estimates that a mere 6 percent of literacy programs belong in this category. This type of program gears its efforts toward eliminating economic disparities by developing and practicing models of a new economic order. Essentially, this program type is a political model espousing the idea that the conflict between the haves and the have-nots has been going on for centuries. The model is therefore a conflict model and students learn to strategize for social change even if such a strategy requires unrest.

Caswell suggests that even with the varying goals, all literacy volunteer programs require students, an administrative structure, and materials. Moreover, he rejects the notion that some program types are more liberal than others. Any type of program can be either conservative or liberal, tightly structured or loose, and can use any type of material.

Characteristics of Community-based Education

The Association for Community Based Education conducted a survey of U.S. literacy programs to (1) define community-based literacy education, (2) ascertain the variety of program features among community-based programs, and (3) determine what action is necessary for these programs to receive adequate support (Zachariadis 1983). The project called for identification of such programs. Programs that met four of six criteria or program characteristics were deemed to be truly community based. An in-depth survey of each program that survived the screening followed. The six criteria, actually program characteristics, were determined by a committee and reevaluated on at least two occasions. Although not all of the programs identified use volunteers, the criteria are useful for demonstrating the ways in which programs can be classified. Following are the six criteria as well as a discussion of terms and principles associated with each.

- **Community orientation.** The program "serves a definable constitutency," is locally based, and uses indigenous staff. Here the "community," as in "community-based education," refers to a unified group of people, not necessarily a geographic location or neighborhood. Examples of such communities include migrant workers, single mothers, and undocumented workers. Program emphasis can then be placed on the unique needs of that particular group.

- **Independent.** The program is independent and autonomous, as opposed to relying on a larger organization such as a public education system for managerial guidelines. Independence, as used here, means flexibility. The presumption is that affiliation with either of the National literacy volunteer organizations, or the public school system, impinges on program freedom in such areas as hiring practices, teacher training, student recruitment,

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*_Cry in the Night_ and _The Anvil_, printed in Bogota, Colombia, are newsletters published by groups affiliated with Laubach Literacy International.

materials acquisition, and program evaluation. Nonaffiliated programs, in any circumstance, would not be accountable to the same groups of people, such as Governmental officials, or in the same ways.

- **Reaches underserved populations.** The program serves populations who typically do not join more traditional programs because of low reading level or poverty status. Zachariadis (1983) makes the claim that community-based programs are reaching the "hard-core" poor, levels III and IV of Eyster et al.'s typology (1975), groups of people that ABE programs, library-based programs, and program affiliates of the national literacy volunteer programs fail to attract. According to Zachariadis, community-based programs are designed to address the specialized needs of such groups whereas the traditional programs are not, though such a claim is difficult to prove.

- **Empowers students.** Program objectives include "economic and social self-sufficiency" of both students and the students' community, through empowerment measures that promote independence. Here individual achievement and independence are linked with community achievement and independence. Methods by which this happens vary considerably, from presentation of job skill training to promoting solidarity among groups effecting social change at the local level, such as voter registration, and parents' and tenants' rights education groups. The belief is that by focusing on acquisition of reading skills alone, traditional programs miss important opportunities to improve the economic well-being of their students.

- **Learner-centered curriculum.** The curriculum is based on learners' objectives, as opposed to a prescribed set of activities and subject matter. At first glance, it would appear that the vast majority of individually based programs aspire to such a goal. As the idea is presented here, however, it becomes clear that, in their purest form, community-based programs eschew diagnosis, assignment of grade level, and use of standardized materials. Instead, they rely on a student's real-life problems and experientially based material.

- **Learner-centered methodology.** Methodologies are "learner centered" as opposed to didactic or authoritative in approach. In light of the importance placed on self-directed learning in the literature of adult education, this principle might appear to be a matter of common sense. Although it might be expected that student objectives and instructional methodologies would be directed by students in community-based programs, as per the previous discussion, it is not clear that this is the case. Rather, even for those programs meeting four of these six criteria, only 13 of the 24 programs could make a claim for this kind of student involvement (Zachariadis 1983).

Analysis of the Typologies

The aforementioned typologies can assist in delineating models of literacy voluntarism and bring understanding to a complicated phenomenon. When similarities among literacy volunteer programs can be identified, programs can be grouped into the same classification. Such a typology is accurate only to the extent that pure types and similarities of literacy volunteer programs can be identified. Otherwise, a typology has no meaning. Generally, all literacy volunteer programs seem to have similarities. As Caswell (1985) observes, they all have students, materials, and administrative procedures. But there are numerous ways to configure each aspect to arrive at an extremely diverse set of programs. Herein lies the difficulty of classifying models of literacy voluntarism. The sheer diversity precludes easy identification of similarities. It is easier to find differences. If the premise that great diversity exists among literacy volunteer programs is acceptable, to

dichotomize them, for the purpose of building a typology, is simplistic. There are many more types of programs than two; there are more than six or eight, as well.

In the Zachariadis (1983) study, for instance, six criteria underscore the *ideal* community-based program. Tolerance for diversity is implicit in the stipulation that only four of the six criteria had to be met before a program was deemed community based. That only 24 programs could be identified indicates that very few programs possess all six criteria. In this sense, the criteria are ideals. Following this line of reasoning, it can be stated that diversity also exists among individually oriented programs. Some programs meet none of the criteria, some meet one, some meet two, and so on.

Another way to look at program types is in terms of five variables: purposes, scope, organizational control, professionalism, and finance. In other words, all programs, at this broad level of abstraction, possess at least five common elements. An understanding of these variables allows literacy voluntarism, with its remarkable diversity, trade-offs, and issues, to be viewed in a more comprehensive way than it could be viewed using a dichotomy approach.

Purposes refers to the goals of the program, its mission, and objectives. In this category alone there is a wide variety of programs. *Scope* means population and area served. To whom does the program have meaning? Can anyone join? Is it countywide? Or is the program designed for special populations? *Organizational setting* refers to the organizational arrangement, whether it be affiliated or independent. Some programs are independent, others are affiliated with larger institutions. Either way, the affiliation sheds light on the decision-making process within a program. *Professionalism*, for our purposes, is the standing practice of training and using the skills of volunteers. It is evidenced through the existence of any requirements, the availability of pre- and inservice training programs, and the presence of operational standards. Finally, *finance* means amount and source of revenue to finance a program. Again, the implication is that programs can be analyzed and differentiated along the lines of these five variables in a way that will draw attention to the choices in programming.

Suppose programs were to be differentiated according to *purpose*. Some programs, of course, have as their stated purpose or their *main* goal the transference of communication and numerical skills. Other programs, as pointed out earlier, act on a mission of "problem solving" on behalf of functionally illiterate adults who live in problem-ridden circumstances. For such programs, the goal has less to do with techniques of teaching reading than it does with familiarizing students with skills of everyday living, such as using Governmental organizations and learning job-seeking skills. Still another purpose of some literacy volunteer programs is to pave the way for political action. With the conviction that there are structural inequalities within our society, personnel in these programs attempt to raise students' social consciousness so they might understand their rights as citizens. Efforts are directed at such inequalities as racism, sexism, and elitism. Thus there are at least three *purposes* of literacy volunteer programs: teaching reading and numercy skills, problem solving, and political action.

Similarly, there is variance in *scope*. While some programs serve anyone residing within certain geographical limits, others concentrate on specific groups of people, native Americans or Spanish-speaking populations, for example. Still other programs serve students within National boundaries. In this respect, there are at least three kinds of programs: group-specific (programs intended for coal miners), geographically based (programs that serve a single town, district, or county), and National (as in the Nicaraguan literacy campaign). Although National literacy volunteer programs are intended to serve students within a certain geographical area, they can be differentiated sharply owing to difference of circumstance. There are, therefore, at least three types

of literacy programs that can be differentiated according to scope: group specific, geographically based, and National.

Just as there are different purposes and scopes, so are there different kinds of *organizational settings* of literacy volunteer programs. Some are part of larger Governmental programs, such as adult basic education or cooperative extension and others are associated with the two National organizations, Laubach Literacy Action and Literacy Volunteers of America. These types of programs, known as affiliated, tend to follow national standards, norms for action, and a common mission of transmission of reading skills. Other types of programs are independent in nature but are administratively linked with larger organizations, with YWCAs, factories, schools, community colleges, churches, and libraries, for instance. Some programs receive funding from a number of sponsors and hence are known as multilevel programs. A fourth type of organizational situation is private/independent. In such cases, projects stand alone with no direct association with a larger organization. Such programs are numerous, though they are not nearly as visible as the other types. To reiterate, there are at least four types of organizational situations in literacy voluntarism: association with similar kinds of programs, administrative attachment to different types of organizations, multilevel sponsorship, and private/independent organization. Settings may also be combined as, for example, when an LVA affiliate is housed in a correctional facility.

A fourth way of distinguishing literacy volunteer programs is by assessing their *professionalism*. Here the term is used to denote the variance in selection and preparation of volunteers as well as in the standards for performance. In some settings, volunteers receive extensive amounts of training and are asked to assume an extraordinary amount of responsibility. In other programs, the training is minimal and the role of a volunteer might be limited to routine tasks. Training and role do not always fit so neatly together. In another type of program, volunteers are afforded considerable training but are limited in their function, removed from decision-making opportunities. In the final example, volunteers may be given no formal training but may well be responsible for administrative aspects, personnel decision making, and evaluation. Thus, literacy volunteer programs can be differentiated by four types of *professionalism*: high-level volunteer training, high-level responsibilities; high-level training, low-level responsibilities; low-level training, high-level responsibilities; and low-level training, low-level responsibilities.

Another vital variable is *finance*. Some programs, those few that are totally sponsored by other programs, may never see a budget sheet. Others raise money from Governmental and foundation grants, and, at times, may charge students a small tuition fee. Still a third type is unable to secure funds from traditional foundation and Governmental sources of revenue and must rely on grants from small community organizations, fund-raising efforts, and donations from volunteers and students. To summarize, there are at least three kinds of funding patterns that distinguish literacy volunteer programs: programs that receive funding from a single source, programs that gain multilevel funding, and programs that utilize only grass roots fund-raising techniques.

To recap, the following are the major structural variables that characterize individual adult literacy programs:

- **Purpose**

  —Teaching reading and numeracy skills
  —Problem solving
  —Political action

- **Scope**

  —Group specific
  —Geographically specific (regional or National)

- **Organizational Setting**

  —Affiliated with similar kinds of programs
  —Attached administratively to larger, different kinds of organization
  —Multilevel sponsorship
  —Private/Independent

- **Professionalism**

  —High-level volunteer training, high-level responsibilities
  —High-level volunteer training, low-level responsibilities
  —Low-level volunteer training, high-level responsibilities
  —Low-level volunteer training, low-level responsibilities

- **Finance**

  —Reliance on single grants
  —Multilevel funding
  —Uses only grass roots fund-raising techniques

Selected Characteristics of Literacy Volunteer Programs

This review of local literacy volunteer programs serves as reminder of the diverse nature of literacy voluntarism programs with regard to purpose, scope, organizational setting, professionalism, and finance. The following descriptions are organized according to the format of the aforementioned five variables. Information was gathered from final reports, correspondence with personnel in certain programs, and from compilations of program descriptions. One such compilation of adult literacy programs, undertaken by the National Adult Literacy Project, is a survey of 331 programs that helps to establish a state-of-the-art picture in such areas as recruitment, orientation, counseling, diagnostic testing, instructional methods, and materials (Crandall, Lerche, and Marchilonis 1985).

Purpose

Programs with the goal of teaching reading. The majority of literacy volunteer programs reported in the literature serve the purpose of teaching basic reading to nonreading adults. The reports invariably include strategies for raising grade levels of students in the most expedient way possible. Certain programs, such as Project F.I.S.T. (Functional In-Service Training) and J-CARP (Jefferson County Adult Reading Program), based in New Jersey and Kentucky respectively, have achieved recognition by demonstrating outstanding retention rates and significant gains in student reading performance (Darling, Puckett, and Paull 1983; Esposito 1983; Saltiel 1982; Slatkin 1981a and 1981b). J-CARP partially uses the Laubach method for teaching reading. Both programs are part of the National Diffusion Network (NDN) and anticipate becoming Nationally oriented.

Programs with the goal of helping students solve problems. A number of programs are competency based and offer students assistance with functional skills in such areas as health, law, government, consumer economics, occupational knowledge, and community resources. A program that uses the Adult Performance Level Objectives (Northcutt et al. 1975) is Project SAVE (State Adult Volunteers in Education) in Miami, Arizona. The handbook, *Organizing a Community Based Literacy Program* (Sizemore 1984), provides details. Some programs, such as Project VITAL in Indiana, seek to improve the quality of materials by incorporating newspapers, magazines, dictionaries, bank forms, transportation schedules, and catalogues, into the lessons (Armstrong and Hunt 1982).

Programs with the goal of prompting political action. Among the community-oriented programs are Project Literacy in San Francisco; the Multilingual Education, Research, and Training Program; and Literacy Volunteers of Chicago. Each of these programs offer new visions of participation through group discussions (Zachariadis 1983). In San Francisco, illiteracy is viewed in terms of the systematic social, political, and economic disinheritance of a massive segment of American people, most of whom are poor and descended from an ethnic minority. With the conviction that learning should be a provocative and empowering experience, the programs develop strategies of instructional dialogue where individual and collective development are interdependent. The strategy is reminiscent of Freire's (1970, 1985) dialogical approach to increasing levels of consciousness.

Scope

Group specific. The community-oriented programs tend to be group specific in scope. The Multilingual Education, Research and Training Program in San Antonio was begun by a group of Chicana women whose purpose was to define and begin to resolve economic, social, and political problems facing the impoverished Mexican-American community. Program members are Hispanic with low income levels and range in age from 16 to 81 years; 90 percent are women. Methods of instruction include discussion of issues, debate, critical analysis, phonic analysis of group-developed vocabulary, and creation of stories of hope (Zachariadis 1983). It can be argued that these particular strategies gain a particular meaning because students share a similar context.

Locally based. Most literacy projects in the United States operate within a single town or county. On occasion, a program receives special funding to expand to neighboring counties, as did the South Carolina Literacy Association (Harris 1984). One goal of regional programs is to administer services, such as training of volunteers, on a cost-efficient basis.

National campaigns. National literacy campaigns have existed in Chile, Cuba, Finland, Italy, Kenya, the Netherlands, Nicaragua, Tanzania, and the United Kingdom. The most dramatic successes, measured by literacy rates of more than 90 percent, are built around the mobilization of many thousands of tutors, carried out by youth organizations, women's unions, and peasant associations. In Cuba, for example, within 16 weeks, 100,000 young people between the ages of 10 and 16 were trained, equipped with such supplies as books, lamps, and hammocks, and placed in the homes of nonreaders. During the next year, 700,000 people learned to read (Deiner 1981; Kozol 1978; Morales 1981). Twenty years later, a similar approach was attempted in Nicaragua and reached 37 percent of the illiterate population. Successes of these campaigns, according to Cardenal and Miller (1981), are attributable more to the enthusiasm of volunteers and timeliness of the instruction than to the technical merits of the operation. Also, these two campaigns were part of, or a continuation of, the revolutionary mentality and reflected a desirable political outlook.

Organizational Setting

Affiliated programs. Affiliated programs have the following advantages: communication with persons in similar programs, training opportunities, and standardization of services. LVA affiliates and LLA programs are linked to their respective National offices through agreements, common training, and standards of programming, as well as through organizational loyalty. LLA and LVA programs are sponsored by a wide range of groups and organizations, including correctional facilities, schools, churches, factories, colleges, and libraries. For the most part, LLA and LVA programs are all-volunteer organizations, and most often retain the right to make decisions about the program.

Programs attached administratively to different kinds of organizations. Literacy volunteer programs that are attached administratively to larger organizations often have advantages of interorganizational cooperation and fiscal security, but they also run the risk of becoming trapped in administrative red tape. Examples include one that is urban (Mattleman 1984), one that provides a link between adult basic education and business and industry (Fogoros 1981), one that places literacy volunteers in a rehabilitation hospital (Bondi and Apter 1983), and still another that encourages college students to become literacy volunteers (Walker 1983).

Multilevel sponsorship. Some projects, such as the Community Education Right to Read Program in Allen, Texas (Outman, Pringle, and Latimer 1984), achieve multisponsorship with such agencies as the library, local industries, churches, and schools. In some ways, such an arrangement allows a program more freedom than would attachment to a single organization.

Private/Independent. Private/independent literacy volunteer programs may have the most amount of freedom, but they typically do not receive the same funding and interorganizational cooperation as other programs. The Multilingual Education, Research, and Training Program is one such example (Zachariadis 1983).

Professionalism

High-level training, high-level responsibility. Certain Canadian programs make few distinctions between volunteers and paid teachers. Volunteers are given the same privileges as teachers in decision making, access to information, and training. Moreover, it is a stated philosophy of certain programs, such as Algonquin College in Ottawa and East End Literacy in Toronto, that efforts ought to be made to achieve a democratic working environment among all people associated with the program, including students, volunteers, and paid personnel (Bernstein 1980; Dehli, Greenway, and Alkenbrack 1984; and Webber 1983). Democracy is achieved but not at the expense of efficiency.

High-level training, low-level responsibility. Volunteers are occasionally viewed with suspicion. Project Homebound in Butte, Montana, placed volunteers in teams with a certified teacher, teacher aides, and a materials specialist. Program administrators replaced volunteers when certain standards were not met. In this way, fears of volunteer incompetence were managed (Harsted 1981). The J-CARP program also believes that the professionalism of volunteer ought to be controlled. According to program officials (Darling, Puckett, and Paull 1983), the professionals are the "bedrock of the program" (p. 8), whereas volunteers are cost-efficient, add character to the program, and provide an important link with the community. Despite such attitudes toward volunteers, retention of volunteers in J-CARP is no worse than that in programs sponsored by LLA or LVA (ibid.).

Low-level training, low-level responsibility. A program associated with both LLA and LVA, the Tri-State Literacy Council in Huntington, West Virginia, provides options for volunteer involvement in addition to serving as a reading tutor.* Volunteers are used in clerical functions and recruitment efforts to assist with roles that neither require great amounts of training nor carry much responsibility. The training of volunteers, however, matches the responsibilities of the job, an indication of an efficient program.

Finance

Reliance on grants and fund-raising efforts. Funding sources for literacy voluntarism include local administrative agencies (such as community colleges and school districts), government grants (such as Section 310 of the Adult Education Act and Library Services and Construction Act), and private foundation grants. Most sources of funding carry expectations that students will make gains in reading and that appropriate tests will be conducted. Programs receiving Section 310 monies, for example, are expected to diagnose students and to monitor their progress in terms of grade-level increases, as do adult basic education programs. The National literacy organizations, LLA and LVA, follow a similar policy and test students for grade-level improvement. The wealthiest sources of funding measure success in terms of abstract statistical information about student enrollment, participation, progress, and retention.

Multilevel funding. Programs that receive multilevel funding, such as Project LEARN in Cleveland, the Minneapolis Literacy Council, Hawaii Literacy, Inc., and the Collin County Right to Read Program, spend considerable amounts of energy raising funds and must be precise in their measurements of such matters as student progress and volunteer retention (Outman, Pringle, and Latimer 1984; Pasch and Oakely 1985). To accommodate funding sources, administrators of such literacy volunteer programs must be able to translate dollars spent into gains made. Again, success is defined in numerical terms, efficiency of effort, and numbers served, all of which are quantitative measures.

Grass roots funding. Other types of programs, such as the San Francisco Literacy Project (1983), do not measure success in similar ways and cannot furnish numerical accounts of grade levels and students served. When literacy volunteer programs are democratic and cooperative, it is even difficult to maintain attendance records. Indicators of success are, instead, group specific according to the context of the particular group and the nature of the specific problem or problems addressed. It is indeed ironic that literacy volunteer programs that succeed in reaching the populations most difficult to reach find it such a challenge to maintain fiscal solvency.

Conclusion

It should be clear by now that many options exist for literacy programming. Distinctions among literacy volunteer programs along the lines of the aforementioned model are useful only to the extent that they raise awareness of the variety of possibilities. The five variables are intended to illuminate choices. However, by virtue of the fact that all adult literacy efforts combined have not reached even 10 percent of the illiterate population, any available choice is insufficient; no single model of literacy voluntarism is acceptable in its current form.

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*Information on the Tri-State Literacy Council was obtained from the author's personal correspondence with Sally Adkins, Coordinator, Tri-State Literacy Council, April 1985.

An analysis of program reports reveals the incipient technicist nature of the field of literacy voluntarism. Technicism can be defined as an overreliance on tools, technical definitions, and statistical explanations. When such methodological considerations as how to test students in the most efficient manner supplant such human considerations as continually searching for answers to what it means to be literate, and asking what students need most in order to lead happy and productive lives, then technicism reigns.

The quest for efficiency, though admirable at one level, has led to authoritative models of literacy voluntarism. In some programs, volunteer roles are carefully defined, so carefully that the powers of volunteers are well controlled. Certain tools, such as diagnostic exams and phonetic reading approaches, have gained such auras of importance that they are assumed to be beyond the comprehension of volunteers. Only certified teachers should administer a test; only materials from the National office should be used. The roles of volunteers and students are defined too carefully to bring these individuals into the debate about why one curriculum is better than another. Their powers are too limited to permit a democratic setting.

Competition interferes. Clearly, there is competition in the field of literacy voluntarism, even among similar programs. There is a detectable elitism, with claims of superiority of materials, method, and even boards of directors. Instead of cooperation among programs to achieve a coordination of effort, programs view each other as rivals and competitors for scarce resources. Instead of cooperating to achieve a higher standard of National literacy, working together for appropriate allocation of resources and assisting all programs to prosper, literacy volunteer programs of all kinds remain isolated and parochial.

In the wake of the infighting are examples of effective national literacy campaigns in a number of other countries. The lesson to be learned from them is that methodology does not cause success. The methodology of the Cuban literacy campaign, in fact, was quite primitive. The dedication of the volunteers is more important.

> It was the Brigatista who became the first firm sprout from the seed of the Cuban man and woman. The campaign opened up an unknown world to the young literacy workers that allowed them to identify with peasant problems and to come to know and love those people abandoned for so long, whom they had been taught to disparage. (Morales 1981, p. 39)

In the following section, administrative issues will be reviewed along with choices of programming and topics for further investigation.

ADMINISTRATIVE CONCERNS AND PROGRAMMATIC ISSUES

Even from a review of only a small number of programs, enough evidence emerges to confirm that there is no singular administrative approach that satisfactorily serves all types of literacy volunteer programs. It is difficult to fathom why programs vary as much as they do. Some programs stress professionalism, others collegiality. In terms of networking, some programs go to extraordinary lengths to secure linkages with other community agencies, others remain isolated and hidden. With regard to decision making, some programs remove volunteers entirely from decision making, others demand their participation in it. For variance of scope, some programs rely on specific groups of students and volunteers, other programs welcome all people who have a desire to learn literacy skills or to volunteer. In terms of the services volunteers perform, some programs utilize them in highly specialized and prescribed ways, whereas other programs make no real distinction between volunteers and teachers. For organizational structure, some programs have achieved highly technical and complicated program strategies, whereas others have simple devices and easygoing program procedures.

This section contains an analysis of administrative considerations; it is meant to spark discussion of prevailing issues. The approach is to review selected material pertinent to literacy volunteer administration and then to raise administrative points that are prevalent in literacy volunteer programs. The points are intended more to shape policy for programming than to actually provide administrative strategy.

Literature on Administration of Literacy Volunteer Programs

Including manuals, reports, and books, perhaps as much as three-fourths of the literature base is devoted to describing the mechanics of volunteer-based programs. One reason for the preponderance of such material is that final reports, manuals, or books concerning administration of volunteer-based programs are generally stipulated as a part of funding requirements for grants received from libraries, State offices of adult basic education, and local school and community college authorities (Bennett 1983; Bernstein 1980; Bockbrader 1983; Borden 1984; Darling, Puckett, and Paull 1983; Dehli, Greenaway, and Alkenbrack 1984; Drake and Morgan 1975; Koehler 1984a and 1984b; Outman, Pringle, and Latimer 1984; Quickel and Wise 1982; Sawyer 1984; Simpson and Koehler 1984; Sizemore 1984; Suttle and Stewart 1985; and Webber 1985). Such administrative manuals are frequently written as if they are intended for novices in the profession and suggest that literacy voluntarism itself is a new idea. Administrative materials, especially those contained in program reports, are laden with success stories, not failures, that are often attributed to a keen organizational strategy. One outcome from this is that, over a 30-year span, manuals of volunteer administration have proliferated but have remained general and unchanged.

Administrative models for voluntarism have been developed by a large assembly of writers (Ilsley and Niemi 1981; Naylor 1967; Scheirer 1977; Schindler-Rainman and Lippitt 1975; Smith 1974; and Wilson 1976); by the two National literacy organizations; and by local programs, especially those receiving 310 money from the Adult Education Act through State departments of education. This statement is not intended to downplay the importance of contributions to the field of

literacy voluntarism by other groups, such as members of the library science profession. On the contrary, many good ideas for program administration can be found there (Lyman 1977, for example). However, as worthwhile as it is, such material is found in smaller doses and is less abundant than are program reports of 310 projects. Besides, the point has been made that the proportion of literature from differing schools of thought is not necessarily representative of the proportion of practice, as has been suggested in the case of community-oriented programs.

Three interesting sources that depict a variety of models for delivery of literacy voluntarism are the *Guidebook for Effective Literacy Practice* (Crandall, Lerche, and Marchilonis 1985), *Adult Literacy: Study of Community Based Literacy Programs* (Zachariadis 1983), and *Guidelines for Effective Adult Literacy Programs* (Mayer 1984). The first two are surveys of programs and attempt to discover unique features of literacy programs. In the first, programs were surveyed on such matters as site selection, recruitment techniques, orientation, counseling, testing, instructional methods, student assessment, and program evaluation. In the second, the variables included mission or purposes of the program, instructional goals, instructional or program approaches, recruitment strategies, learning activities, types of participants, types of instructors, funding, staffing configuration, and outcomes. The third listing offers a thorough managerial plan that was subjected to criticisms of 38 outside readers, most of whom are practitioners in the field of literacy voluntarism.

Other administrative guidelines can be found in Noble (1982). In this monograph readers learn how to facilitate Freire-like literacy programs. Discussion centers on a problem-solving approach to literacy and the role of facilitators in helping groups of students identify common problems.

Considerations for Building Policy on Literacy Voluntarism

Eggert (1984) observes that before managerial strategies can make sense, the philosophy upon which they are built must be examined.

> Any paper on educational strategies should begin with the warning that strategies have historically been the red herrings of education, i.e., there is a tendency to identify with and argue about the technologies associated with a given educational philosophy rather than with the heart of the matter, the educational philosophy itself. (p. 10)

The point rings true in the field of literacy voluntarism because many techniques are established and passed down from program to program and stated in the literature without critical examination of their true value. One explanation is that techniques are concrete, linked with program successes, and can be shared easily. Discussions of program philosophy, on the other hand, are abstract, require much consideration, and usually lead to debate.

To return to the schema presented in preceding sections, without a full examination of choices or purpose, scope, organizational setting, professionalism, and finance, a program runs the risk of being haphazard, misusing resources, and, ultimately, coming to an early demise. In the following paragraphs, administrative considerations are outlined according to choices of purpose and scope, organizational setting, professionalism, and finance. They are intended to prompt policy formulation in areas that are often taken for granted.

Choices of Purpose and Scope

Choices of purpose are linked with choices of scope. The intent and planned outcomes of any educational program are stipulated by who is to be served. In this case the question "Which non-reading adults should a program serve?" is related to "What problems are going to be addressed?" By answering one, the other is answered. As Eggert (1984) states, the answer depends on how literacy is defined. Mention has been made of the following three purposes of literacy programs: skill development in reading, problem solving, and political action. The ensuing discussion suggests how these purposes stipulate scope.

When literacy is defined in terms of reading, communication, and numerical skills alone, other choices seem to fall into place. For example, determination of who is to be served, where, and how moves program designers to the domain of planning, relatively unencumbered by weighty philosophical decisions. Cooperation is sought from a variety of agencies and funding sources and, as long as the site is in the general proximity of the students, location can be almost anywhere. To run a literacy volunteer program of this type, a modicum of organization is obviously required. To satisfy sponsoring organizations and to lend structure to the process, volunteers would receive training in the methodology of teaching reading. Finally, a plan for a volunteer process, alluded to previously, might include strategies for recruitment, selection, training, placement, and evaluation.

Another purpose of literacy volunteer programs is problem solving. Administration of programs having this purpose is difficult because the subject matter can be obscure, meaning that consistency and control can evade administrators. Here the issue is "What problems will be addressed?" Should a program focus on only a few concerns, such as job training and health-related issues, or should it expand the opportunities for students and concern itself with such problems as tenants' rights, voter registration, powerlessness, and racism?

With selection of the specific purpose within this category comes selection of type of student. Should the program accept all people and allow instruction for any problem those students care to solve? If so, chaos would reign. The question is, *which* students with *what* kind of problems are to be served. Once resolved, other issues become more manageable. For example, a program serving black adults, which is specifically designed to enhance students' awareness of tenants' rights, operates with an implicit understanding of who is best served, where the program might (or might not) be housed, and how volunteers should be trained. But difficult choices might have to be made regarding who may and who may not volunteer and who may and who may not enroll.

The third purpose of literacy volunteer programs is political action. Leaders of programs with this purpose believe that structural inequalities exist in society that require attention just as much, if not more, than does the symptom of illiteracy. Compared to the aforementioned models, this one is the most sacrificial of all. That is, once the purpose of social change has been determined, program leaders may sacrifice access to funding, institutions, and volunteers who are interested in protecting the status quo. So in a sense, the choices are simple: sacrifice status for the sake of consistency of purpose. When it comes to scope, again, confusion can result if agreement regarding the direction of the political action cannot be found. Literacy programs that subscribe to this purpose, in any case, opt out of the mainstream and are unlikely to form linkages with school districts, law enforcement agencies, vocational-technical institutes, and other common institutions.

In summary, when it comes to determining purposes of literacy volunteer efforts, certain questions might be addressed:

- Whose values are served by the literacy volunteer program? At times, the values of students, volunteers, and a sponsoring organization can come into conflict, such as when

volunteer training is mandated, or when needless information is required from students, such as income, marital status, and age. Either example could be a source of conflict. When conflicts of this nature arise, discussions among all invested parties help to ease the tension.

- Do the purposes determine who can and cannot join? That is, when a program is specific about its purposes, it must also be specific about the type of student to be served. When purposes are quite specific—a voter registration drive for minority students, for example—so are the types of students sought. A trade-off occurs in this regard between specialization of purpose and egalitarianism. In other words, a program cannot be "open to all" when the purposes are narrowly defined. Conversely, when programs attempt to be all things to all people, they find they cannot provide instruction of much lasting value.

- Likewise, are volunteers to be selected according to program purposes? Should anyone be allowed to volunteer? If not, by what criteria ought they to be selected? Contained in the purposes of programs are stipulations for the kind of commitment and skills desired from volunteers. One of the purposes of any literacy volunteer program should be to construct a challenging and worthwhile environment for volunteers. The experience for volunteers is not likely to be beneficial if they have not learned and agreed with the mission of the program prior to beginning their service.

Choices of Organization Setting

Earlier, this category was subdivided into four parts: affiliation with similar kinds of programs, administrative attachment to different kinds of organizations, multilevel sponsorship, and private/independent. The question here is "With whom can a literacy volunteer program form linkages in such a way that the benefits are mutual?" As Mark (1985) argues, "There is a growing consensus that the challenge of education—specifically assuring basic literacy for all youth and adults—can only be met by locally built partnerships between all segments of the community" (p. 5). But there are caveats that, to some extent, lie in the purposes of the program.

While it would be difficult to imagine who would oppose a program that has as its purpose to teach people to read, it is not difficult to see how political action groups, even when they also help people learn to read, are not well received by a number of institutions. Such programs, at times, sacrifice beneficial opportunities for cooperation with other institutions, even in times of financial desperation, for the sake of maintaining a mission. Though not all programs face such dramatic choices, the goal in forming linkages, beyond winning support and cooperation, is the need to educate community leaders and decision makers. The following are managerial considerations for the four types of literacy volunteer programs based on organizational setting:

- Literacy volunteer programs are social change organizations. Some people advocate the social change mission of literacy programs more deliberately than others. To what extent does advocating the rights of students jeopardize program status?

- In cases where volunteer programs are independent but attached to a sponsoring organization, such as a library or to a National organization, can agreement be reached on such matters as definitions of literacy, program goals, roles for volunteers, and how to manage an advisory council? These kinds of agreements can hardly be taken for granted. One person's definition might require extensive organizational resources. Another person's might be easily fulfilled by a low-cost program. Frequent discussions can provide clarification.

- Are assumptions about volunteers similar at all levels of an organization? Have volunteers gained the approval and trust of higher level decision makers? If not, when there are opportunities to share information about the program, such as during staff meetings or meetings of similar kinds, it is helpful to invite organizational decision makers. When higher level administrators are either over- or underenthusiastic, there may be a problem. In these situations education of administration ought to be a top priority.

- What is the relationship between organizational setting and the establishment of a climate for volunteer participation? Do volunteers "fit" in the organization? The type of organizational setting can influence a volunteer's decision whether or not to continue. Here climate is regarded as "the predominant set of standards, attitudes, and conditions that govern a volunteer-based program" (Ilsley and Niemi 1981, p. 30). Whether the establishment of a climate in a volunteer-based program is within the power of a volunteer coordinator is a matter for investigation. Suffice it to say that the type of leadership a volunteer coordinator displays influences the comfort level of volunteers. One theory is that volunteers should be involved in decision making as far as possible, or at least be encouraged to suggest program changes or air grievances without fear of reprisal.

- Affiliation with other organizations can influence the type of organizational structure a literacy volunteer program employs. Decisions regarding location of classes, hours of service, and the type of ancillary services afforded, e.g., provisions for child care and transportation, might be desired by a volunteer program but vetoed by a higher-level decision maker. Procedures for accountability can shape a program and, for that reason, might be required by higher-level decision makers but opposed by a volunteer coordinator. To attain harmony, it is wise to evaluate periodically how organizational demands influence the life of the project and quality of service to students. Upon the advice of volunteers and students, it may be discovered that a program might be better off to achieve greater amounts of independence.

- As for linkages with community organizations, such as public schools, police departments, and mental health institutions. it is important to remember that while some people associated with the program may be on friendly terms with them, others may not. Some people—students, volunteers and paid staff alike—are threatened by such organizations. Meetings about linkages among people associated with the program is not only considerate, it is democratic.

Choices of Professionalism

Earlier, professionalism was defined in terms of training and role. Program types were hypothesized based on the observation that some programs provide extensive training opportunities for volunteers whereas other programs encourage volunteers to "learn by doing." At the same time, the role of a volunteer can vary from routine tasks to extensive decision making, meaning that some volunteers are asked to assume authority for the progress of the program while others are not. Thus there are two variables, training and authority, that are helpful in understanding professionalism.

Issues arise in this category when volunteers are either under- or overused. An *underused* volunteer is one whose energy and talent is greater than required by a program. An *overused* volunteer is one who does not have the energy or talent to perform the tasks assigned by a program. In either situation, there are problems. To dispose of such problems, administrators attempt

to achieve a "goodness of fit" between volunteers' efforts and program requirements. The following are questions and considerations designed to help managers achieve this balance.

- A fundamental question is "What roles should volunteers perform in a literacy volunteer program?" There are, of course, roles to be found other than one-to-one tutor and tutor trainer. Group I roles, those that are the most common, include career counselor, child care specialist, diagnostician, food worker, reading specialist, receptionist, and transportation coordinator. Group II roles, those that are less common, might include proposal writer, fundraiser, artist, public relations agent, researcher, and materials specialist.

- In situations where volunteers assist paid staff, to what extent do volunteers, particularly those with high levels of expertise, pose a threat to paid staff? Without some groundwork, volunteers may threaten paid staff, even if those threats are imaginary. One fear is that volunteers will not be dedicated to the cause. Another is that volunteer positions will supplant the paid positions. Too commonly, the managerial strategy used to allay such fears includes avoiding the assignment of significant responsibilities to volunteers. Unfortunately, this sort of strategy buries the fears rather than allowing the fears to be faced squarely.

- Is it important for volunteers to adhere to a schedule? Certain roles, such as those listed in group I, carry responsibilities that require structure and reliability. Generally speaking, volunteer assignments that include direct service with students ought to be delivered with a firm time orientation. Other positions, such as those represented in Group II, can be afforded a flexible time arrangement. The argument is that when tasks do not call for a structured schedule, it is probably best to refrain from imposing one. Control of volunteer performance may have less to do with prescribing hours than it does with assigning appropriate responsibilities and conditions to achieve tasks.

- There are several important facets of volunteer training: orientation, preservice, and inservice, each of which serves an important function. Programs that display the most consistency of purpose are those that value a learning environment for all individuals associated with them—students, volunteers, and staff alike. In the case of volunteers, one way to achieve this environment is to provide upward sequential training, or transition training, when volunteers are ready to assume new responsibilities. A well-planned training program can make a positive difference in helping a volunteer identify additional areas of interest while allowing an organization to recognize volunteers' increased abilities.

- In this sense, training is not routine and does not resemble authoritative models that attempt to preserve the status quo through mandated instruction. Rather, when possible, training should reflect the dynamic quality of a volunteer program. As for determination of topics for training, what would happen if training in all its forms was planned jointly by volunteers and administrative personnel?

Choices of Finance

Literacy volunteer programs can be characterized as underfunded. Administrators scramble to bring funding up to minimum levels and their skill in grant writing is becoming more evident. At first glance, it appears that choices of finance boil down to one point: how to get more money. Further reflection on the issue brings a different viewpoint—that not all types of funding are the same. The following questions are designed to raise awareness of fund-raising considerations:

- Who should pay for literacy voluntarism? Funding sources include Governmental grants, corporate and private foundation grants, social service agency grants, volunteer donations, and student tuition. With each source or combination of funding, there are advantages and disadvantages. And different types of literacy volunteer programs tolerate different types of funding better than others.

- Does control of program planning follow allocation of fiscal resources? Control can range from direct intervention in such matters as hiring to demands for certain kinds of actions and reporting schemes. It would be a mistake to assume that funds are handed to program administrators without constraints on how these funds will be spent. If a program can tolerate the constraints of funding without sacrificing program policies and principles, then the funding source is probably a good one.

- Is lack of funding the chief impediment for achieving a literate Nation? It is easy to lament poor funding levels, but if the problems lie elsewhere, twice the current allocations combined may produce only minimal improvements. It is important to be realistic about the limits of effectiveness.

Conclusion

Several themes characterize this section; one is that in literacy voluntarism program choice is a function of clarified policy. Policy can be viewed as a mediator between sets of rights, the expedient route to achieving stated ends in a way that is filled with wisdom and reason. Wise practice includes critical examination of policy and consistency of purpose, scope, organizational setting, professionalism, and finance. Literacy voluntarism is more than technique, it is the rational use of technique in light of purpose. Excellence in volunteer programming cannot be found in the development of program tools alone, such as organizational linkages, marketing schemes, and grant writing. Program tools, at best, can merely illuminate purpose. But careful examination of purpose and policy holds promise for expansion of literacy voluntarism beyond its current level of effectiveness. Certainly, the future of literacy voluntarism is more in the hands of wise practitioners than the generosity of external funders.

Policy in literacy voluntarism mediates the rights of students, volunteers, and the organizations that sponsor them, and each player has unique values, standards, and goals. When organizational standards predominate, such as when roles for volunteers are predetermined and fixed, and when lessons between volunteers and students have been presupposed, then both student and volunteer values have been sublimated. Such a strategy is not necessarily wrongminded. Sometimes it is important to provide extremely consistent, and therefore structured service, even if that service appears to be rigid. But other options exist, such as student-defined curricula, volunteer-defined training, and cooperative, democratic programs. Such ideas are not necessarily correct for every situation. But in light of the fact that quite a number of effective models have not received much attention either in the literature or by funding agents, and because the models of literacy voluntarism that predominate are not cutting the illiteracy pool in significant ways, it may be time to try something new.

The concluding section describes the prevailing assumptions of literacy volunteer practice, and calls for research of those assumptions before they are taken too seriously.

ADVANCING THE LITERATURE BASE OF LITERACY VOLUNTARISM

Since administrative, or "how-to," material is so prevalent and similar, especially for one-to-one type literacy volunteer programs, the literature base does not need more of it. Clearly, in a developmental sense, the field of literacy voluntarism is at an incipient stage; many project directors view their work as being out of the ordinary. Furthermore, most administrative manuals concern such issues as reliability of volunteers, relations between volunteers and paid staff, limits of volunteer involvement, ideas for training and supervision of volunteers, and organizational structures. Administrative strategies of this nature offer much needed guidance and a sense of reliability to the effort. Commonly, the assumptions contained within them are drawn from common sense, not research. As literacy voluntarism gains attention in all of its forms, the chances are that foundational research will confirm or refute prevailing managerial assumptions.

Johnson (1985) brings a number of recommendations to the forefront that are intended to guide National policy on literacy voluntarism. Among those recommendations is one calling for research in adult literacy.

> Additional research is required to help fill the gaps in knowledge essential for improved practice. Of particular importance are unanswered questions about the differences in literacy development during childhood and adulthood, and about the functional requirements in diverse real-life settings where literacy demands occur. (p. 59)

The recommendation is well taken and it is hoped the challenge will be met. Of course there are other common assumptions that require research as well. Following, some prevailing assumptions are listed and questions for research are posed.

Assumption 1. **A well-engineered and highly structured program model is the most suitable one for student and volunteer involvement.** Distinguished practitioners of literacy voluntarism (Darling, Puckett, and Paull 1983) place importance on technique in areas such as recruitment, linkages, instruction, and administration of literacy volunteer programs. The assumption is that there is a relationship between program effectiveness and technical rationality. Common sense might indicate that attainment of consistency through structuring literacy volunteer programs is a worthwhile quest. Accordingly, measures are taken regarding *numbers* of students served, *cost per student*, and increases in *grade-point level*. There is no convincing proof from research that even sophisticated programs offer either students or volunteers lasting advantages in life. Research is needed to determine the relationship of long-range benefits to students and volunteers from highly technical programs.

Assumption 2. **Literacy volunteer programs ought to be highly structured.** Similar to assumption 1 is the assumption that retention and performance of volunteers is linked with program structure. In this sense, technical rationality is a guiding principle for volunteer management. The assumption is made that volunteers will perform services in the best way possible through well-planned volunteer processes and highly structured training. If this is so, research is needed to confirm which aspects of structure are important to volunteers and to the programs that support them.

A contrary hypothesis is that structure for volunteers, while adding a sense of organization, delimits the decision-making powers of volunteers. After all, if training has been predetermined, organizational strategies laid out, and volunteer roles fixed, volunteers are given a take-it-or-leave-it proposition. It is assumed that the more structure the better, but there is no convincing proof of this from research.

Assumption 3. **Volunteers pose a threat to paid staff.** Literacy volunteer programs are frequently planned to account for the fears and ideas of paid staff. The assumption is that volunteers may threaten the security of paid staff. Research is needed to determine what kinds of relationships between paid staff and volunteers are most beneficial.

Assumption 4. **Literacy volunteer programs benefit from diversity and heterogeneity of volunteers.** This point is much in debate. As we have seen, some programs will accept the help of all willing persons, whereas other programs prefer indigenous volunteers. Research on the importance and role of solidarity in volunteer settings will help to settle such debates.

Assumption 5. **Partnerships between corporate organizations and the voluntary sector will provide status, not to mention increased revenue, to the field of literacy voluntarism.** The advent of corporate involvement in literacy voluntarism is a relatively new phenomenon. Advantages of a partnership include increased status and funding. Yet to be determined is the influence of corporate pressure on program flexibility. Similarly, what kinds of literacy volunteer programs are to be included and what kinds are to be excluded from partnership? Does the emergence of the corporate sector in literacy voluntarism preclude independent programs from reaching "legitimate" status? Research is needed to find out more about the relationship between the corporate and voluntary sectors.

Assumption 6. **Volunteers must be significantly involved if illiteracy is to be meaningfully reduced in the United States.** The Adult Education Act of 1966 promised eradication of illiteracy within 10 years, yet literacy education efforts merely keep pace with the rising illiteracy problem. Research is needed to find out what it would take to reduce adult illiteracy significantly. What would be the role of volunteers in the process? What kind of social unrest will this awaken?

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